

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11
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-----085343 131626Z /72

R 121723Z MAY 78
FM AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6221
INFO AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE RIO DE JANEIRO 2223

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, BR
SUBJECT: SENATOR MAGALHAES PINTO'S CAMPAIGN FOR THE PRESIDENCY

REF: RIO DE JANEIRO 1482

1. SINCE SENATOR MAGALHAES PINTO'S DENUNCIATION OF THE ARENA PARTY CONVENTION WHICH NOMINATED GENERAL FIGUEREIKB AS THE PARTY'S OFFICIAL CANDIDATE FOR THE PRESIDENCY (REFTEL), THE SENATOR HAS CONTINUED TO PURSUE HIS OWN CANDIDACY WITH VIGOR - DENOUNCING THE REGIME FOR VARIOUS ACTS, PROPOUNDING THE NEED OF A RETURN TO FULL DEMOCRACY, AND EVIDENTLY LENDING HIMSELF, OR AT LEAST GIVING THE APPEARANCE OF DOING SO, TO VARIOUS POLITICAL MACHINATIONS.

2. PRIOR TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S SELECTION OF ARENA CANDIDATES FOR STATE GOVERNORS, AN ARENA ASSOCIATE OF THE SENATOR APPARENTLY ATTEMPTED, WITHOUT SUCCESS, TO ARRANGE A MEETING BETWEEN THE SENATOR AND THE CURRENT GOVERNOR OF MINAS GERAIS, WHO IS ALSO THE OFFICIAL CANDIDATE FOR VICE PRESIDENT. UNDER THIS SCENARIO WHICH ABORTED, MAGALHAES WOULD RETURN AS A PARTY FAITHFUL DESISTING

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FROM HIS CAMPAIGN AND BE GRANTED SOME ROLE IN THE SELECTION OF THE NEW GOVERNOR OF MINAS GERAIS. OF COURSE, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ULTIMATELY CHOSE ARENA PARTY PRESIDENT, FRANCELINO PEREIRA, AS THE OFFICIAL CANDIDATE FOR GOVERNOR OF MINAS. MAGALHAES REACTED STRONGLY TO THE SELECTION OF GOVERNORS, STATING IN A NOTE, WHICH WAS PROHIBITED FROM BEING CITED ON RADIO

AND TELEVISION, THAT THE PRESIDENT HAD CHOSEN A PROCESS WHICH WEAKENED BOTH THE CANDIDATES AND THE GOVERNMENT AND WHICH LEFT EVERYONE IN THE PRESIDENT'S DEBT.

3. THE SENATOR HAS, HOWEVER, CAREFULLY REFRAINED FROM SEVERING HIS LINKS WITH ARENA EVEN AS HE CRITICIZES THE REGIME. HE HAS BEEN EVASIVE ABOUT HIS RUNNING FOR RE-ELECTION AS AN ARENA SENAOTR FROM MINAS GERAIS ALTHOUGH OVSERVERS IN BELO HORIZONTE TOLD EMBASSY AND CONGEN OFFICERS THIS WEEK THAT THE CONSENSUS WAS THAT HE WOULD NOT CONTEST AND MDB CAMARA LEADER TANCREDO NEVES WOULD WIN ELECTION IN NOVEMBER. (REPORTS HAVE SURFACED RECENTLY THAT MAGALHAES MIGHT RUN FOR THE CAMARA).

4. THE SENATOR HAS MEANTIME HAD SEVERAL MEETINGS WITH MDB SENATE LEADER BROSSARD TO DISCUSS POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION. IT APPEARS THAT THE SENATOR MIGHT WELL JOIN FORCES WITH THE MDB TO THE EXTENT OF COORDINATING TACTICS TO PUSH THE REGIME TOWARDS SUBSTANTIVE POLITICAL REFORMS. (THE SENATOR IS APPARENTLY PREVENTED FROM RUNNING AS AN MDB CANDIDATE IN THE INDIRECT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS SINCE ELECTORAL LAWS REQUIRE A PRIOR PARTY AFFILIATION OF AT LEAST TWO YEARS.)
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5. COMMENT: MAGALHAES CLEARLY CONTINUES TO BE AN IRRITANT TO THE REGIME ALTHOUGH NOT A SERIOUS CHALLENGE TO GENERAL FIGUEREIDO. WHAT PRECISELY HE HOPES TO ACHIEVE PERSONALLY, ASIDE FROM POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION, REMAINS UNCLEAR EVEN TO HIS ASSOCIATES IN ARENA.

6. THIS MESSAGE WAS COORDINATED WITH EMBASSY BRASILIA.
DEXTER

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Message Attributes

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